



Journal of Socio - Economic Development Studies
Social Sciences Department
Alzahra University
Vol. 1, No. 2, Autumn & Winter 2024
pp. 21-24



Research Paper

Studying the Effect of Cultural Capital and Nutritional Literacy on Improving the Life Quality¹

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Received: 2023/12/31

Accepted: 2024/07/24

INTRODUCTION

As a multi-dimensional and subjective concept, life quality is influenced by various socio-cultural, economic, and environmental factors (Nakova, 2023). It includes mental well-being, health, education, job, social relationships, and personal beliefs that reflect a person's overall satisfaction with life. This dynamic concept depends on the culture and evolves. In comparing and evaluating the quality of life in different contexts and societies, it is necessary to consider its various dimensions and perspectives. Understanding and improving the quality of life requires a comprehensive approach that covers both objective indicators and subjective perceptions. So that it can highlight the complexity and interconnectedness of factors that contribute to overall well-being (Hong, 2023). Quality of life is a vital concept with high research potential

1. doi: 10.22051/IJOSED.2024.46044.1033

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that affects various fields, including social development, politics, employment, and international relations. Understanding and improving quality of life may lead to better decision-making, resource allocation, and social development strategies, and ultimately, the overall well-being of society (Nakova, 2023). It includes various aspects such as work, love, social relationships, and spirituality. People differently understand and prioritize these dimensions. The quality of life is not a static concept; however, it changes based on experiences, circumstances, and personal growth. The evaluation of life quality is culturally bounded; that is, the standards and values defining a good life quality can differ in societies. Cultural norms and expectations play a decisive role in the formation of people's understanding of well-being and satisfaction (Lolas, 2023). This research aims to study the effect of cultural capital and nutritional literacy on improving life quality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It is descriptive-explanatory research and practical research in terms of its purpose. The statistical population of the research includes patients with heart attacks in Shahid Madani Hospital of Tabriz. 200 patients were randomly selected as the study sample. To collect research data, the quality-of-life scale, cultural capital scale, and nutritional literacy scale were used. The scales are standard and their validity was confirmed in many researches. The World Health Organization Quality of Life Scale (WHOQOL) was used to measure the patient's quality of life. It has four subscales and two total scores. The overall scores measure the patients' life quality and express their life satisfaction level (Nejati and Ashairi, 2008: 60). This scale has four dimensions: physical health, mental health, environmental health, quality of life, and general health. Cronbach's alpha coefficient in the present study is 0.88. Cultural capital was measured using the Sharbatian and Eskandari Scale (2017). It has 13 items with five that measure three subscales, each with a defined number of items. Its Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.83. Nutritional literacy was measured using Hobi et al. Scale (2019). It measures the awareness and knowledge of the citizens about sources of fats, consumption of fruits and vegetables, snacks and sweets, and food groups. It has nine items whose Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.62.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the Pearson test showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between cultural capital and life quality (sig= 0.403). Also, there is a positive and significant relationship between nutritional literacy and life quality



(sig=0.412). Among the cultural capital dimensions, environmental health has the highest relationship with cultural capital and nutritional literacy, and mental health, general health, and physical health are listed, respectively.

CONCLUSION

It can be said that environmental health is one of the important aspects of people's life quality and increasing the cultural capital and nutritional literacy can significantly improve people's quality of life. According to the obtained results, it is suggested that more investments are required in cultural fields, including education, participation in cultural activities, social networks, health awareness, and health, since higher education, as a cultural capital, provides better job opportunities, more income, and higher social status, all of which lead to an improvement in the people's life quality. Participating in cultural activities (e.g. visiting museums, attending the theater, participating in the arts) enriches one's life by broadening perspectives, increasing creativity, and building social connections. Enriched social capital, as cultural capital, can provide emotional support, job opportunities, and access to information, thereby overall quality of life is improved. Health-related awareness and practices (e.g., nutrition, fitness, and mental health), as cultural capital, can improve life quality by having a longer and healthier life. Cultural capital is the ability to navigate diverse cultural contexts, which is increasingly important in global workplaces.

It can help better career development and interpersonal relationships. Public policies, which increase access to cultural capital, may reduce the social inequalities on the one hand and improve the overall quality of life on the other hand. Regarding nutritional literacy, the following suggestions are offered: holding workshops and training courses to familiarize people with the principles of healthy eating; Increasing people's knowledge on healthy eating which leads to better food choices and improves the life quality; Creating educational content in social networks using infographics and short videos; Easy and widespread access to nutrition information through the mass media can have a positive effect on public awareness; Planning and implementing nutritional programs in schools to educate the students; the healthy eating habits in children and teenagers can improve their life quality in the future; Supporting the studies and research on the impact of nutritional literacy on various aspects of life quality. The results of scientific research may help policymakers and experts to code more effective programs and strategies to promote nutrition literacy; designing educational and interactive applications and software to increase nutritional literacy. Modern technologies increase people's access to nutrition education and increase the

effectiveness of education. Improving nutritional literacy has a significant effect on improving people's life quality. Through education, media usage, counseling, conducting scientific research, and also the use of new technologies, it will be possible to increase public awareness of the life quality and improve the general health and well-being of society.

Keywords: Quality of life, Public health, Cultural capital, Nutritional literacy, Bourdieu.

JEL Classification: I14, I18, I19, I19.

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